

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **I. SUMMARY OF STATEWIDE FINDINGS RELATED TO LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY - 2005**

Progress is noted from 2004 to 2005 in a number of dimensions of capacity to provide essential public health services. All agencies now have a system to assure that staff can be contacted at all times if emergencies occur or communicable diseases need to be reported. Agencies are reporting increased use of technology such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS). An increasing number of agencies have their own web site to share information with the public, and a number of agencies have developed alternative capacity to communicate during disaster situations.

**Availability:** 14% of local public health agencies in Missouri reported they are open for business at their main facility less than 40 hours a week during 2005. Most agencies (68%) serve the public between 40 and 44 hours each week, and 18% are open 45 hours or more each week. (See Graph 1.1 and Data Table 1.1)

**Satellite Locations:** 21% of agencies report having branch locations, down from 23% in 2004. Of the 24 agencies with branch offices, 75% are open to provide services less than 8 hours per week during hours other than 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., while 13% are open 24 or more hours each week during hours other than 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (See Graph 1.2.1 and Data Tables 1.2 & 1.2.1)

**Emergency Contact:** 100% of agencies have a system to receive notification and respond to emergencies at all times of the day or night. Cell phones are relied upon by 96% of agencies for after-hours communication, and 84% of agencies provide cell phones for their key staff. Fifty-two percent (52%) of agencies use pagers. Agency staff is contacted after hours by 911 centers, a local law enforcement agency or by an answering service. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the agencies have written protocols for staff response to calls after hours. (See Graphs 1.3.1, 1.3.2.1 & 1.4 and Data Tables 1.3.1, 1.3.2.1 & 1.4)

**Public Health Business Off Site:** over half (52%) of agencies report that from 25% to 49% of their business is conducted outside of their facility. Twenty-three percent (23%) of agencies report that 50% or more of public health business is conducted off site. (See Graph 1.5 and Data Table 1.5)

**Billing for Services:** 97% of agencies bill Medicaid for services, 89% bill Medicare, and 31% bill private insurance companies. A majority of agencies (81%) charge their clients for some services. Forty-eight local public health agencies (42%) also receive payment for services they provide to other agencies. (See Graph 2.1 and Data Table 2.1)

**Technology:** The percentage of local agencies with a web site increased from 49% in 2004 to more than half (54%) in 2005. Twenty-nine (29) agencies (25%) reportedly use GIS technology for public health purposes like tracking sewage systems, water well locations, lead

testing results, communicable diseases, or other applications. (See Graphs 3.1.1 thru 3.1.3, & 3.2.1 thru 3.2.6 and Data Tables 3.1.1 thru 3.1.3 & 3.2.1 thru 3.2.6)

**Quality Improvement:** 81% of agencies report having designated staff for planning and implementing quality improvement methods across public health programs. However, only 29% of agencies rate their capacity to utilize quality improvement principles throughout their organization as “very good”. Forty-six percent (46%) of agencies report they are doing “okay” in implementing quality improvement methods. Ninety-five percent (95%) of agencies evaluate their programs to determine whether stated goals and outcomes are being achieved. Eighty-two percent (82%) report that quality improvement and customer service characteristics are incorporated into staff performance expectations. (See Graphs 4.1 thru 4.4 and Data Tables 4.1 thru 4.4)

**Strategic Planning:** 89% of agencies report having a strategic plan. Of the 102 agencies that have a plan, 49% report that it was updated in 2004 or 2005. Forty percent (40%) have not updated their plan for 3 years or more. (See Graphs 6.1 & 6.1.1 and Data Tables 6.1 & 6.1.1)

Sixty-one percent (61%) of agencies report referring to their strategic plan from one to four times during the year; however, 20% do not ever refer to it. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the agencies with a strategic plan involved their staff in its development or revision, 86% involved their governing body, and 54% involved members of their community. Strategic plans are used by 69% of agencies for performance management, 73% use it for budget allocation, and 59% use the plan for marketing. (See Graphs 6.1.2 thru 6.1.4 and Data Tables 6.1.2 thru 6.1.4)